

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7811

C O N F I D E N T I A L NASSAU 0184

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR BF

SUBJ: ATTEMPT BY GCOB MINISTER TO INCREASE EMPLOYMENT OF
BAHAMIANs AT AUTEC

1. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS AND MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY FOR CENTRAL ANDROS, DARRELL ROLLE, REQUESTED EMBASSY LAST SEPTEMBER TO MAKE AVAILABLE LIST OF CIVILIAN POSITIONS AT AUTEC WHICH COULD BE FILLED BY QUALIFIED BAHAMIANs. EMBASSY RESPONDED TO REQUEST BY LETTER DATED SEPT. 24, 1975 WITH A LIST OF 84 POSITIONS. DESPITE ROLLE'S VERBAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF LETTER AND SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS WITH AMBASSADOR TO EFFECT THAT HE WOULD BE FOLLOWING UP ON MATTER, ROLLE DID NOTHING UNTIL LAST WEEK WHEN HE REQUESTED A MEETING WITH EMBASSY OFFICIALS TO DISCUSS IT. IN MEETING HELD IN OFFICE OF MINISTER OF LABOR AND NATIONAL INSURANCE DARLING YESTERDAY AFTERNOON, ROLLE INFORMED DCM AND NLO THAT PRESS OF BUSINESS, I.E. BUDGET PREPARATION, FOREIGN TRAVEL, AND CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS HAD PREVENTED HIS FOCUSING ON THE ISSUE BUT THAT HE WOULD NOW LIKE TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITY OF PLACING BAHAMIANs, PARTICULARLY ANDROS RESIDENTs, INTO SLOTS. ROLLE EMPHASIZED THAT AUTEC WAS THE ONLY EMPLOYER IN CENTRAL ANDROS AND THAT EVEN EMPLOYING 60 MORE BAHAMIANs AT BASE WOULD HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON LOCAL EMPLOYMENT PICTURE AND BY IMPLICATION HIS CHANCES FOR RE-ELECTION. HE REQUESTED EMBASSY TO SUPPLY HIM WITH SPECIFIC JOB DESCRIPTIONs

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FOR POSITIONS TOGETHER WITH DATES WHEN PRESENT CONTRACTS WOULD

EXPIRE AND SUGGESTED THAT EMBASSY OFFICIALS MEET NEXT WEEK WITH THE PERMANENT SECRETARIES OF LABOR AND HOME AFFAIRS TO DISCUSS MATTER FURTHER. EMBASSY OFFICERS EXPLAINED THAT FROM POINT OF VIEW OF ATEC AND PRIVATE CONTRACTOR AT BASE, EMPLOYMENT OF QUALIFIED LOCALS WOULD BE DESIRABLE BECAUSE OF INCREASED EMPLOYEE CONTINUITY GIVEN PRESENT HIGH TURN-OVER OF U.S. CONTRACT PERSONNEL. IT WAS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT EMBASSY AND GCOB HAD GONE THROUGH SIMILAR EXERCISE SOME TIME AGO BUT THIS HAD NOT BEEN FRUITFUL BECAUSE OF FAILURE OF QUALIFIED BAHAMIANS TO APPLY FOR JOBS. ROLLE WAS CONVINCED (AS EMBASSY IS NOT) THAT THERE WERE SUFFICIENT QUALIFIED BAHAMIANS ON ANDROS ITSELF TO FILL THE POSITIONS WITHOUT HAVING TO RECRUIT PERSONNEL FROM NEW PROVIDENCE WHO HE AGREED WOULD PROBABLY BE RELUCTANT TO MOVE TO ANDROS. EMBASSY IS NEVERTHELESS PRESENTLY IN PROCESS OF OBTAINING REQUESTED INFORMATION AND PLANS TO MEET WITH BAHAMIAN OFFICIALS NEXT WEEK.

2. COMMENT: ROLLE'S APPROACH THROUGHOUT MEETING APPEARED TO BE STRAIGHTFORWARD ATTEMPT BY LOCAL POLITICIAN TO ASSIST AND THUS IMPROVE HIS IMAGE WITH CONSTITUENTS IN ANTICIPATION OF UP-COMING ELECTION AND NOTHING MORE. ALTHOUGH ROLLE IS A PERSONAL PROTEGE AND CLOSE FRIEND OF PRIME MINISTER PINDLING AND AS A CABINET MINISTER BOTH HE AND DARLING WOULD NORMALLY BE PRIVY TO ANY DECISIONS VIS-A-VIS THE FACILITIES NEGOTIATIONS, NEITHER DISPLAYED ANY INDICATION THAT THESE HAD PLAYED A PART OR WERE OTHERWISE RELATED TO THEIR REQUEST FOR MEETING. NEITHER DID THEY PURSUE TOPIC OF EITHER FORMAL OR ON-THE-JOB TRAINING FOR BAHAMIANS IN EVENT APPLICANTS FAILED TO MEET QUALIFICATIONS. AS FOR ATEC ITSELF, EMBASSY OFFICERS WERE LEFT WITH STRONG IMPRESSION THAT, AT LEAST IN THESE TWO MINISTER'S MINDS, THE BASE WAS THERE AND WAS LIKELY TO REMAIN SO FOR SOME TIME.

TAYLOR

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